



Annual Report

2022 – 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation Pathfinders acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and also extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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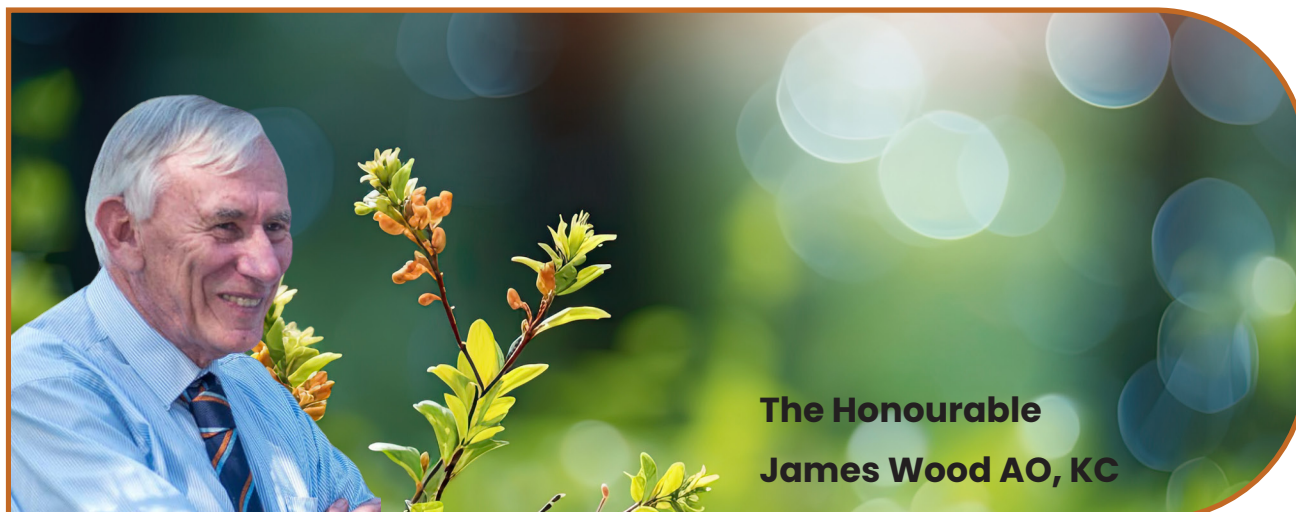
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Message from our Patron



**The Honourable
James Wood AO, KC**

The Honourable Justice James Wood AO, KC has previously held roles that include the Chairman of Law Reform Commission of New South Wales, the Chairman of the New South Wales Sentencing Council, the Inspector of the Police Integrity Commission, and a former judge in Australia. He currently holds a Judicial Officer role with the NSW State Parole Authority.

Sincere congratulations to Pathfinders on another remarkable year. Your dedication and commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of children, young people and families are truly commendable.

As Patron, I am grateful for the opportunity to support your work. Your programs not only provide essential services and support but have also restored dignity, confidence, and a sense of belonging to those in need.

The number of lives you've touched and the transformative work you've accomplished is a testament to your passion and unwavering resolve to continue to champion the rights and well-being of the communities you serve.

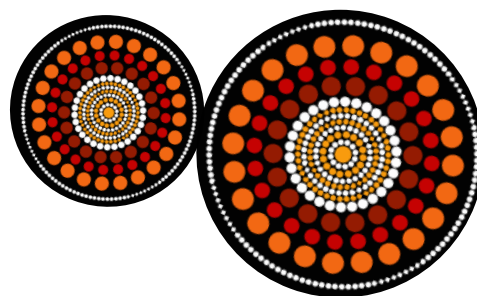
Every child and family you've supported is a story of hope, resilience, and a brighter tomorrow and the ripple effect of your efforts to create a more compassionate and inclusive society will be profound.

Again, Pathfinders has set a high standard for others to follow. I am honoured to be a part of this journey and to contribute to the positive change you're bringing to the world. The results showcased in this annual report vividly reflect the incredible dedication and passion of your team and reaffirm my belief in the work you are doing.

Congratulations once again on a fantastic year, and wishing you many more years of success.

The Honourable James Wood AO, KC

Reconciliation



The Reconciliation Action Plan program’s framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasise not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but it also empowers and enables staff to contribute to this process as well.

Pathfinders has always placed the greater implementation, recognition and demonstration of reconciliation, at the forefront of our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community.

Our Aboriginal client base is demonstrating it is not only the largest component of participants of our services, but is the fastest growing. We currently provide 36 programs and projects to a client-base in which statistically we identify a large and growing percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) journey will focus and strengthen our partnering and joint decision-making with, and service delivery to, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that the plan is inclusive and culturally sensitive.

As we update and progress our RAP journey, we are combining and defining the unique learnings we have gathered through our many years of service provision to date, and these are the elements and focal points of our RAP plan.

Ongoing collaboration and communication will be essential to ensure that the RAP is effective, meaningful, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

Pathfinders has grown in its service capacities and offerings and is actively transitioning to a holistic person centred service provider. In this shared journey with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we recognise that to fully support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, we must deliver holistic services which do not conflict with their traditional, cultural and spiritual roots.

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The Message Stick

The “Community Meeting” message stick shows a commitment to our protocol, values, and ethical processes in our operations of a broad suite of programs, projects, and services aiming to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for children, youth, and families within the communities we service.



Performance and Highlights

Message from our Chief Executive Officer

Throughout this year, collaboration has stood as the cornerstone of our success and set the stage for growth and achievement in the years to come.

We've forged strong partnerships, brought together the expertise of diverse minds, and leveraged the strength of alliances to create sustainable, positive change for thousands of people.

As a result we have achieved milestones that were once considered ambitious.

Our collaborative efforts extended beyond the walls of our organisation, encompassing government agencies, non-profits, community groups, education and healthcare providers, and numerous stakeholders.

The strategic partnership between the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program and UNICEF Australia is a major step towards achieving our goal of ensuring that all Aboriginal children will have their birth registered and receive their birth certificate. The program also received generous support from private donations and the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

The Momentum Program kicked off in northern NSW in November. The program provides free support to assist successful participants in three areas: obtaining a birth certificate, attending driving lessons to obtain a driver's licence, and finding suitable and sustainable employment. The program is a partnership between Pathfinders, Real Futures, ACE Community College and the NSW Government.

There were a number of significant highlights from a year filled with remarkable achievements.

What a joy it was to learn that our Board Director, Aunty Rosemary Curtis, received a long overdue Order of Australia Medal for her services to the Indigenous community in Glen Innes. Aunty Rosemary has been the driving

force behind some of our most exciting projects including the purchase and renovation of the Royal Hotel in Glen Innes. We were all delighted for Aunty Rosemary, her family and the local community.

Tyler Murray, our trainee employee at Tilbuster Station was awarded the TAFE State Trainee of the Year and was the Gili Award recipient for Agribusiness Student of the Year. The Gili Awards highlight and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' achievements.

Individual teams and programs received business awards from councils and chambers of commerce, progressing to the state level.

We welcomed Pathfinders new National Directors for Out-of-Home Care and Business Development.

The Pathfinders' Board has provided invaluable guidance and expertise, shaping our strategies and ensuring our actions align with our organisational values and goals. Their wisdom and strategic advice drive us forward, enabling us to make well-informed decisions and achieve significant milestones. We thank Monique Beange, Craig Hunt and Tony Gargan for their time on our Board.

Our staff, on the front lines and behind the scenes, demonstrated unwavering commitment and dedication to our mission. Their hard work, empathy, and determination have been instrumental in implementing community-centric approaches and delivering essential services to those in need. By understanding their specific challenges and aspirations, we have tailored our programs to make a meaningful, long-term difference. Our teams demonstrated extraordinary resilience, creativity, and a willingness to adapt to an ever evolving landscape.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our staff, board, supporters, and the communities we are privileged to serve.

Alan Brennan, Chief Executive Officer

Message from our Co-Chairs

Pathfinders responded to the urgent and growing need for its services during the financial year by doing what it does best – leveraging its strengths and expertise, forming new partnerships, and being flexible and responsive.

In opening new locations and expanding existing ones, Pathfinders made its services more accessible to a wider audience, reaching more people and communities without compromising on the quality of the services it delivered. This approach allowed us to make a meaningful and sustainable impact on the pressing demands we face, and continue to face.

Pathfinders recognised that it cannot meet the growing demand for its services alone. As a result, we actively sought out and established new partnerships with other organisations, government agencies, and businesses that could complement our efforts and resources.

Programs like Momentum, Family Connect, Specialist Homelessness Services, the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate program, out-of-home care, the Pumpkin Run and non-placement support are just some of the programs where partnerships were critical to their success.

We invested heavily in professional development for staff and carers to develop their skills in addressing the needs of our clients. Trauma-informed care training, parental workshops, upskilling where we identified gaps in our ability to deliver services, and engaging external expertise where necessary, all enhanced the services and support provided by Pathfinders. These steps have built resilience into the business so we can scale accordingly to better handle future challenges and surges in demand.

Through our Reconciliation Action Plan we have committed to genuine reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to address historical and ongoing disparities, particularly around access to services

for children and families in rural and remote areas. This commitment involves acknowledging the past, building trust, and actively working towards a more equitable and inclusive future. We wish to create an environment that ensures cultural safety, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities feel respected and validated in their cultural identity and experiences. We are committed to ongoing learning and improvement, recognising that reconciliation is a journey that requires continuous effort and adaptation.

Trust and reputation are central to Pathfinders' success. Clients and their families need to trust that Pathfinders will provide them with the care and support they require. Communities, especially when we are an unknown entity, need to know that our organisation is built on integrity and effectiveness. Governments need to know we are accountable, transparent and compliant, and staff need to trust in the Pathfinders' leadership and mission to foster a sense of purpose and belonging.

Pathfinders' strong and stable leadership has been crucial in navigating the complex and often ambiguous environment during these challenging times.

The dedication and efforts of Alan, senior management, frontline staff, and support teams are deeply appreciated, not only by the Board but also by the communities you serve. Pathfinders' role in communities and its commitment to making a difference are indeed something to be immensely proud of and underscore the importance of trust, inclusivity and collaboration that you have built on over the past three decades.

Korrina Schultz and Leeah Daley, Co-Chairs

Performance and Highlights

Highlights 2022 –2023



Upgrade to Rose Villa

Grant funding for the development of the Rose Villa facility was received from Lendlease's FutureSteps grant program. It is the first time this funding has been provided to a regional project in NSW.

The upgraded facility will have the capacity to house 10 to 13 young people who will each have their own unit. The upgrades include the installation of a new communal kitchen, dining, and recreational lounge area. The premises offer 10 units, one 3-bedroom residence and one fully self-contained unit.



Community Donations

Donations to our services came in the form of: warm woollen blankets from the Inverell Women's Shed; a toy drive from Inverell radio station, 95.1 GEM FM; gift packages from Hope in a Suitcase; fundraising by the students at UNE's Austin Earle Page College; Inverell High School raised funds for the Inverell Women and Children's Refuge; Armidale Central Rotary Group provided funds to support the completion of the Yarning Circle at Tilbuster Station; Buntings donated gift vouchers; the Glen Innes Ballroom Dancers raised funds for the refuge; CWA donated toys; and Regional Australia Bank hosted a charity golf day for Pathfinders.

New Website

Pathfinders worked with the team from Procure Spot to design and launch a new website. The new upgrade has enhanced and improved access for clients seeking support services.

Positive Feedback

In November our out-of-home care services received very positive feedback from the New South Wales Office of Children's Guardian following an audit.

Tyler Murray

Pathfinder's staff member, Tyler Murray, received two significant awards: TAFE NSW Gili Award - Agribusiness Student of the Year and the TAFE NSW Excellence Award. Tyler's TAFE teacher, Patrick Fagan said "His skill level has improved incredibly, and his communication skills have greatly benefited from this training. He was given the confidence and reassurance through the course to transfer these skills into the workplace."

Tyler was a participant in a number of our out-of-home care programs and is a valued member of the Tilbuster Station team.

Collaborations

In line with recommendations from Pathfinders' Patron, The Hon. Justice James Wood, a collaboration between the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Health, and Family Connect Services was established to integrate Family Connect with the NSW Child Protection Programs.

The Pumpkin Run

The Pumpkin Run fed thousands of people on the mid north coast and the far north coast. The change in direction from our usual run was to support people who had been impacted by the devastating floods in 2022.

New Yarning Circle

In March 2022 the team at Tilbuster Station completed the new Yarning Circle. The Yarning Circle provides a safe place for staff and young people to talk, share, and yarn together. It's a place to build respectful relationships and enrich young people's learning experiences.

PNABC

UNICEF Australia provided financial support to the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program. With their assistance we were able to expand the program into Canberra and Western NSW.

Crowdfunding

More than \$200,000 was raised for the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program through crowd-funding with the support of Chuffed.org. Over 3000 separate donations were received from right across the country.

Mid North Coast Business Awards

Pathfinders was named as the winner of the Outstanding Community Organisation Award at the 2022 Mid North Coast Business Awards held in Coffs Harbour. The award recognised Pathfinders as a community organisation that works to improve the social, cultural or environmental wellbeing of the community. The Mid North Coast Business Awards celebrates the innovation, resilience and dedication of businesses across the region.

Momentum

In November 2022 the Momentum program, a partnership between Pathfinders, Real Futures and ACE Community Colleges, was officially launched. After signing up for Momentum applicants are supported to apply for their birth certificates so that they have formal ID. Once they have received their birth certificates, they move to M Week. During M Week participants attend learner driver classes and attend driving lessons with instructors from ACE Community Colleges. They are then connected with employers for potential work opportunities.



Rosemary Curtis OAM

In January Pathfinders' Board Member and Aboriginal Elder Rosemary Curtis was awarded an Order of Australia for her services to Aboriginal communities. His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) said: "Aunty Rose has been a devoted, caring and kind member of many communities including the Glen Innes community for decades and a Board Director for Pathfinders for 10 years."

"Her spirit, tenacity and determination have been instrumental in shepherding in significant projects to support disadvantaged youth, shaped Government policy and influenced generations of Aboriginal families."



Organisation Profile

Pathfinders Overview

Pathfinders is an organisation at the forefront of providing advocacy, support and services for disadvantaged communities. We have operated in the New England and North-West Tablelands regions of NSW for more than 30 years and have recently expanded our reach to the Mid North Coast.

Pathfinders

Our focus is on addressing the complex challenges and issues within the social care landscape. We facilitate foster care, out-of-home care, homelessness services, family referral services and supported independent living for young people.

We carry out additional functions such as delivering tailored services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, providing support services for people with disability, and offering early education programs and training programs for young people.

Pathfinders plays an important ongoing role in supporting families, individuals and children to overcome various social issues. By taking risks to help those at risk, we are making sure no one is left behind.

We deliver our services and programs in a thoughtful and compassionate manner. It is only by understanding the issues that impact a person that we can help them create long-lasting stability, resilience and empowerment.

Pathfinders is fortunate to have a robust front-line staff network, backed by an experienced board and strong leadership team. Together, we have an unwavering commitment to being the agents of change and improving the lives of people we work with. This success has been recognised on many levels and has resulted in numerous awards for excellence.



Vision

The Pathfinders' vision is to develop thriving communities in which all people can fully participate and develop freely through mutual trust and acceptance. We see this being achieved through collaborative strategies and best practices, a strong and respectful workforce, and advancing bold and progressive ideas and policies.

Mission

Our mission is to empower people to live with hope and equal opportunity to reach their potential. We provide hope through purpose and passion; generously sharing our expertise, knowledge and resources to make a transformative difference. We create equal opportunity by facilitating access to education, employment and safe housing; breaking down barriers that are obstacles to growth and independence.

Services and Programs

- Foster care and out-of-home care services
- Specialist homelessness services, including a women and children's refuge and supported accommodation services for young people
- Child protection and family referral services
- Parenting and family strengthening workshops
- Family preservation services, supervised contact, therapeutic activities and after care services
- NDIS support services, such as Support Your Path
- Pathfinders' National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program
- Aboriginal Early Years Program
- Marie Delaney Training and Education Centre in Armidale providing vocational skills development, education and accreditation
- Field placements and training for TAFE and university students



Foster Care Week

During the celebrations of Foster Care and Kinship Care Week in 2022, a plaque was unveiled at Tilbuster Station. The plaque has been installed in the garden to thank all of our foster carers and to express our deepest appreciation for the care that they provide for children in their care.



Company Management

Finance & Resources

Our Finance, IT, and Resources team manage our budgets and financial strategies to oversee IT systems and resource distribution, supporting and enhancing Pathfinders' operational capabilities. Their expertise and coordination contribute to the overall success and sustainability of our programs and ser-

Finance

The board's focus on operational excellence and careful financial management ensured that we were able to grow our core business and reinvest in our services and people. The strength of our balance sheet remains essential to our ability to meet the needs of our clients and to deliver sustainable and strong outcomes.

Total revenue increased by \$13,448,829 (37.1%) from \$36,259,491 to \$49,708,320. Contracted revenue comprising Government funding and fee-for-service income increased by \$12,650,948. This reflects the growth in both the Permanency Support and Residential Programs, and Short-term Emergency Placements.

Expenses for the year increased by \$46,433,160 (37.6%) from \$33,742,094 to \$46,433,160. The primary reasons for this increase is from increases in wages and wage related expenses and increases in client and program costs as a result of a growth in Permanency Support and Residential Programs.

Resources

Information Technology

The development of a five-year IT Strategic Plan to ensure we meet the needs of the organisation going forward continues and is expected to be completed by 30 June 2024. This will include the development of a complete suite of operational policies to ensure sound IT governance is maintained.

Our Knowledge Management System (Intranet) continues to be developed and will be operational by 31 December 2023. This has involved a complete review of all Pathfinders policies, procedures, and forms.

Fleet Management

In line with organisational growth. Pathfinders now has 98 owned/leased vehicles. This is an increase of 15 (18%) over 2022 and 42(75%) since 2021.

Property Management

Pathfinders now has 70 owned/leased properties. This is an increase of 11 (19%) over 2022 and 33(89%) since 2021.



Corporate and Community

The 2022-2023 year has seen an expansion of the Corporate Services team in both numbers of staff members and professional skill development, as we create capacity within our systems and structures for continued growth.

Digital Marketing

In the past year, we have made significant strides in enhancing our media presence and marketing efforts. At the start of the year, Pathfinders initiated a collaboration with Procure Spot to revamp the website.

The primary objectives of this overhaul were to enhance the website's accessibility, streamline user navigation, and provide assistance to clients seeking support services. As a result of these improvements, the new website has generated a noticeable increase in online referrals to support services and has driven more contact with the organisation's various programs and services.

Social media has played a significant role in improving communication within the community. The organisation has been actively sharing news, events, and stories related to its services, fostering stronger connections and engagement with the audience. This approach has led to a significant rise in the number of followers across all social media platforms.

On Facebook, the page now has 3,903 followers, marking a notable increase of 520 new followers in the past year. On LinkedIn, the page now has 1,963 followers, with 778 new followers added during the year.

At the beginning of the financial year, Pathfinders worked with Coastal Media and The Video Agency based in Coffs Harbour to produce three Foster Care TV commercials that have been aired in New England and along the Mid-North Coast over the past 12 months.

The new TV commercials were created to assist Pathfinders Out-of-Home Care Services in recruiting new foster carers. With the combination of TV advertising and the availability of new digital foster care resources on the new website, we have seen an increase in inquiries coming through for new carers. The development of the new intranet will assist the organisation in strengthening internal communication between our programs and services across our footprint.

Corporate and Community

Human Resources

During the financial year we welcomed 148 new staff members, bringing our total workforce to 394. The growth in Out-of-Home care was the driving force behind the increased numbers, along with a growth in residential care, Supported Independent Living and the Non-Placement Support Service.

At the time of going to print we have 54 staff (17.18%) who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Our goal is to significantly lift this figure and a number of strategies will be implemented to attract and retain Aboriginal staff to the company.

We continue to increase the use of technology to recruit, interview and onboard new staff within Pathfinders. These systems allow new staff and candidates to participate in an online selection process as well as allowing simplification of capturing and uploading onboarding documents by utilising DocuSign. It allows for a more structured process within recruitment and onboarding, minimising the time required by Corporate Services staff to finalise these processes.

This year Pathfinders commenced an Equine Assisted Learning program. The program has been used by young people in our care as well as Pathfinders' staff. A pilot program of building both self and practice awareness was also created and trialled with staff in our Specialist Homelessness Support Services team. This was very successful and plans for additional programs like this are being finalised.

In 2018, Pathfinders commenced the implementation of the Sanctuary Model, a trauma-informed framework for building an organisational culture. However, due to a number of factors, the Model did not progress to Stage 2. Pathfinders will recommence the implementation of this Model within the organisation.

The Model focuses on safety and creating an understanding of how past adversity and trauma continues to affect someone's behaviour. Sanctuary enables an organisation to create a safe, nonviolent environment that teaches people to cope effectively with stress and trauma and heal their emotional and behavioural issues. It also supports staff and carers to form communities that are supportive and caring and to maintain a culture that reflects these qualities at every level within the organisation.

This three year implementation will commence with the assistance and participation from the Board, Executive Team, identified change management experts, as well as identified Champions from within the organisation.

It has been rewarding to see the stability of staffing in the New England, North West and the Mid North Coast regions, and the continued expansion of various programs and new business adventures that have commenced across the whole organisation.

The 7 Sanctuary Commitments



Work, Health and Safety

It has been a busy and productive 2022–2023 for the Pathfinders' Work, Health and Safety (WHS) team, management and staff, as we keep up with the changes in legislation, codes of practice and the delivery of service.

Pathfinders has achieved a great deal this year with a sustained commitment to workplace inspections, consultation with staff and follow up of outcomes. We have delivered WHS induction courses in Armidale, Inverell, Coffs Harbour and Taree.

Our current priority is to continue with the education processes and the workplace inspections. We are listening to staff and taking on board their specific issues with respect to WHS. One of the outcomes from this process is the review and strengthening of our systems in the area of workplace emergencies. The WHS unit will continue to work with staff and other external stakeholders to further develop and maintain appropriate responses.

Earlier this year, a consultation meeting was had with the Pathfinders' CEO and Senior Executive to develop a blueprint in the provision of WHS services at Pathfinders. This was to acknowledge the significant growth of Pathfinders over the year and to ensure that all risks are re-assessed with the specific purpose of ensuring our continued improvement in providing a safe work environment for all staff, clients, participants, contractors, volunteers and visitors to Pathfinders' workplaces.

As a result, Pathfinders has reaffirmed its continued commitment to promoting and sustaining a safe and healthy workplace for all and one that values inclusion and ensures a healthy, resilient and capable workforce.

In line with the 2022 Code of Practice for psychosocial support Pathfinders has launched its Wellbeing Strategy to enhance manager capability of staff with a mental health challenge, promote staff accountability for their own and their peers' wellbeing, and strengthen mental health literacy across Pathfinders.

Work, Health and Safety is an important process within Pathfinders as we strive to provide safe workplaces, work practices and to educate not only ourselves but the organisation in the processes and practices of reform and best practice principles.



Lisa Harvey

Pathfinder Out-of-Home Care, Intake Manager
Lisa Harvey celebrated 16 years with Pathfinders this year. Lisa has been a dedicated employee of Pathfinders having worked across a number of services and programs during her employment with the organisation.



Foster Care Recruitment

Our TV commercials were designed to appeal to a diverse audience, including retirees, families, singles, and couples, highlighting the full-time care and respite foster care choices available for potential carers.

After the release of the new commercials, our foster care information packages received 36 new downloads from our website.

Community Support

Over the course of the past financial year, Pathfinders has been the fortunate recipient of an extensive and diverse array of support from the community. We are incredibly thankful as we reflect on the generosity of community groups, organisations, businesses, and individuals who have stepped forward to support our work.

We appreciate the assistance we've received, recognising the invaluable contributions made by our supporters, both in terms of their donations and the gift of their time. It is with the utmost sincerity that we wish to express our thanks to each and every one of our supporters who have invested their resources, efforts, and time in Pathfinders, helping us to continue the work we do in our communities.

Thank you to the following community groups, organisations, businesses, and individuals for your support:

95.1 GEM FM

ACE Community Colleges

Alannah and Madelaine Foundation

Armajun Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Armidale Aboriginal Men's Group

Armidale Central Rotary Club

Armidale Community Radio – 2ARM FM92.1

Armidale Express

Armidale Fijian Men's Group

Armidale Market Fresh

Armidale Services Memorial Club

Armidale Regional Council

Armidale Trittech Security

Ashford Local Aboriginal Land Council

Ashford Preschool

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies

Austin Page College – University of New England

Australia Childhood Foundation

Ballina Shire Council

Best Community Services

Biripi Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre

Blue Soul Space

Bunjum Aboriginal Corporation

Burrumbidgee Aboriginal Corporation

Catholic Care Community Kitchen Taree

Centacare

Chuffed.org

CIT Yurauna Centre: Canberra

Clontarf Foundation

Coffs Harbour City Council

Coffs Harbour Uniting Church

Coles Coffs Harbour

Connect Beginnings

Country Women's Association

Dalaga Preschool

Dalaigur & Scribbly Gum Dalai

Danthonia Bruderhof Community

Department of Communities and Justice

Department of Education


Department of Health

Domino's Pizza Inverell

Durri ACMS

FM100.3 Armidale
Gallang Aboriginal Medical Centre
Glen Innes Ballroom Dancers
Glen Innes and Districts Community Centre
Glen Innes and Severn Council
Grazag
Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation
Homes North
Hope in a Suitcase
Intense Therapeutic Outreach Team
Interventions Plus
Inverell Community Violence Prevention Team
Into the Wild
Inverell High School
Inverell Lions Club
Inverell Public School
Inverell Women's Shed
Inverell Shire Council
ITTC – Outreach
JA Tours – Joeys Adventure Kayaking Tours
Joblink Plus
Justice James Wood
Kempsey Healing Together Events
Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre
Kempsey Shire Council
Kinchella Boys Home
Kindly Animal Sanctuary Armidale
Koori Kitchen Lismore
Koori Mail
Ladybug Counselling
Learning the Macleay
Lendlease's FutureSteps Open Grant Program
Leon Murray Homes
Life Style Solution Program
Linking Together Centre
Macintyre High School
Mid Coast Council
Mid North Coast Health
Minimbah Preschool and Primary School
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Ms Linda Burney
Mission Australia Youth On Track
My Forever Family
National Australia Bank
New England Police District
North Haven
North West Local Land Services
Northcott

NSW Office of Children's Guardian
NSW Police Force
NSW Treasury
O'Brien Electrical & Plumbing
Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People
OzHarvest
PCYC Armidale
R & R Care Coffs Harbour
Ready Mob
Real Futures
Red Cross
Regional Australia Bank
Rollands Plains Upper Public School
Ross Hill Public
Rotary Club of Armidale
Rotary Nomads
Rural Cert
Samaritans
Social Futures
Stronger Place Stronger People
Tamworth and Armidale Aboriginal Childrens Service
Tamworth Family Support Services
Taree Connected Beginnings
Taree Public School
Tritech
UNICEF Australia
Uniplan Group
Valley Industry
Vital Health
White Rock Wind Farm
Winangali Infusion
Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services
Youth Justice
Yulineul High School
Tamworth MP Kevin Anderson
Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall
Clarence MP Richie Williamson
Lismore MP Janelle Saffin
Ballina MP Tamara Smith
Tweed MP Geoff Provost
Coffs Harbour MP Gurmeh Singh
Oxley MP Michael Kemp
Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams
Dubbo MP Dugald Saunders



Programs and Services

Children and Family Services

Inverell Family Youth Support Service (IFYSS) places a strong emphasis on cultivating family environments that prioritise the well-being and protection of children. It offers a wide array of services and support tailored to families, adolescents, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Inverell and surrounding communities.

Inverell Family Youth Support Service

IFYSS provides the following services: advocacy to support families; skills development such as parenting and living skills; interagency information to connect families with appropriate services and resources; courses and workshops regarding financial planning and family life; group work and diversion programs for young people at risk.

IFYSS employs three Family Workers to work directly with parents and carers of children aged 0 to 12, adolescents aged 13-25 and Aboriginal families and carers of children aged 0 to 12.

During the financial year IFYSS supported 429 families. Almost 40% of the families identified as being Aboriginal.

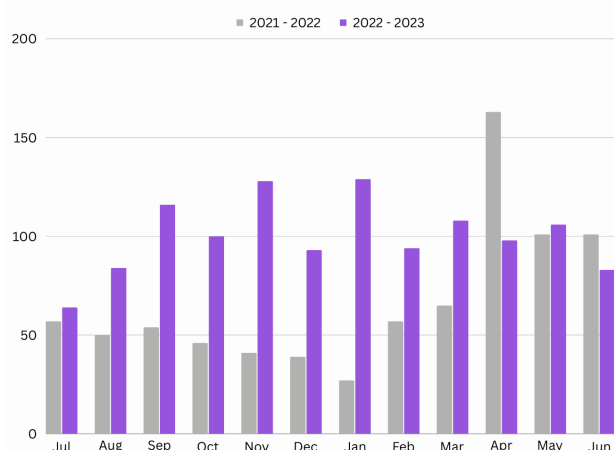


Making a Positive Change

A young man from Inverell was supported by the IFYSS team to leave a toxic family environment where he had been exploited and abused. Unable to navigate his way out, he turned to IFYSS for assistance to begin rebuilding his life. We were able to arrange funding so he could rent a property, supported him to find a job and taught him skills to be able to establish healthy boundaries.

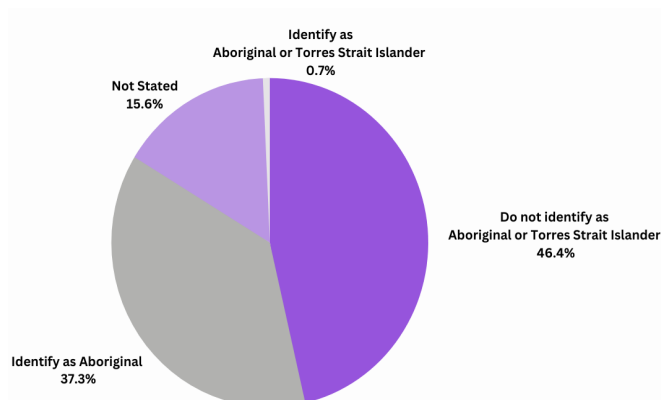


Clients and Support Persons by Month



The numbers per period reflect the number of Clients and Support Persons who attended one or more sessions in that period.

Client Identification



Bunbun Playgroup

Bunbun Aboriginal Supported Playgroup in Ashford is a wonderful initiative that aims to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for families in the Ashford Area. The playgroup serves as a platform for children and their parents or caregivers to come together, engage in various activities, learn, and form meaningful connections within the community. More than 56 families have been involved in the playgroup over the year.

Every school year the playgroup holds 40 weekly sessions, where families are presented with a range of activities catering to different interests and developmental needs of children. These activities encompass music, singing, arts and crafts, imaginary play, and outdoor activities.

Children and Family Services

The Family Connect and Support program, or FCS, serves as a crucial lifeline for families in need, streamlining the process of accessing assistance by offering a central point of contact for both families and service providers.

Family Connect and Support

FCS operates on the fundamental principle of tailoring support to the unique requirements and strengths of each family, ensuring that they are connected with the most suitable services. The primary focus of FCS lies in early intervention and preventive measures to address issues proactively before they escalate into more significant problems.

Throughout the last financial year the FCS team, in collaboration with Social Futures, made a significant impact by supporting 1196 families, surpassing their key performance indicators by an impressive 67%.

What's noteworthy is that over 30% of these families were categorised as having high needs, reflecting the program's efficacy in catering to those who require substantial assistance. The team's involvement in organising and participating in over 30 local events acted as a vital bridge for community members in need, serving as an invaluable icebreaker for those seeking support.

Notably, more than 1000 outbound referrals were facilitated to connect families with local services, underscoring the program's commitment to forging vital connections within the community. A breakdown of the clientele reveals the diversity of those supported, with around 40% of clients identifying as Aboriginal, 31% comprised of children aged 0 to 5, and a substantial 88% of clients aged up to 18 grappling with mental health issues.

The rise in mental health issues within the Mid North Coast region can be attributed to a combination of factors, including the global COVID-19 pandemic, isolation, and the devastating impacts of floods and fires.

The 11-strong team documented their efforts through the completion of more than 15,400 case notes.



National Reconciliation Week

During National Reconciliation Week the Family Connect and Support team attended a number of events across the Mid North Coast in Kempsey, Taree, and Coffs Harbour.

In Taree, the team attended Taree Public School's Reconciliation Week breakfast with the Taree Connected Beginnings staff and local Biripi community members. During the event, the team took over cooking breakfast providing fresh hot pancakes for the guests.

In Kempsey, the team partnered with Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation to celebrate with Dalaigur and Scribbly Gum Dalai (Pre-School).

Finding a Home

Last year Pathfinders was instrumental in supporting Shane Tomkins and his daughter to move from a campsite in the Coopernook State Forest into a unit in Harrington on the Mid North Coast.

Shane and his daughter had found themselves homeless and had been moved on from their site by the Forestry Commission which does not allow permanent camping.

He relocated to a caravan in Harrington but was desperate to find a more stable accommodation. His poor literacy and lack of a permanent address meant he could not access regular services including Centrelink.

Through Pathfinders he was given financial support and was able to begin receiving payments through Centrelink. We helped him to access legal services and to gain custody for his seven year old.

Now living in stable accommodation he is looking for work to be able to better provide for his daughter, who is thriving at school, making new friends and loving riding her new bike!



Photos courtesy of ABC



Active Fest

Pathfinders Family Connect and Support team took part in a number of community events this year including Active Fest event held in partnership with Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation in Kempsey.

Young people in Kempsey were provided with a great day out, with a full range of sporting activities to participate in with giveaways and a free sausage sizzle including morning and afternoon tea.

The NSW Government's Community Sport Rebuild and Recovery Program in conjunction with local Active Kids provides free activities across the state, with funding provided to communities hardest hit by the COVID lockdowns.

Out-of-Home Care Services

Pathfinders is deeply committed to helping children find loving and caring homes, providing them with a stable and supportive family environment. Our mission is centered around the belief that every child deserves to be safe, loved, and healthy, and we aim to address the needs of children in foster care who may have experienced stress and trauma growing up.

Foster Care

In the 2022-2023 period, Pathfinders had 145 children placed with 95 caregivers, an increase of 21 caregivers compared to the previous financial year. Our team travelled as far as Gympie in Queensland, out to Dubbo in western NSW, and south to Wollongong to place children in the most suitable homes.

Pathfinders actively supported Aboriginal children in foster care, with 11 carers and 67 children identified as being Aboriginal. We are committed to meeting the unique needs of Aboriginal children in the foster care system and work to ensure cultural sensitivity and understanding.

Foster Care Services

Pathfinders offers a range of foster care services to meet the diverse needs of children in Out-of-Home Care, including:

Emergency Care

The child will often go to an emergency carer while family options or more long-term options are explored.

Restoration Care

Focusing on reuniting children with their biological families when possible.

Long-Term Care

Offering stable, long-lasting placements for children who may not be able to be reunited with their biological families.

Kinship Care

Placing children with relatives or close family friends when it's in the child's best interest.

High Needs Care

Addressing the needs of children who require specialised care.

Guardianship or Adoption

Exploring permanent options for children who cannot return to their biological families.



Austin Page College Donation

Pathfinders Out-of-Home Care team and staff from the Armidale office participated in the Austin Page College's annual fundraising activities the Charities Cross Arts (CHARTS) Dinner and Colour Fun Run where the college raised over \$10,000 donating over \$5,000 to Pathfinders in July last year.

Quick Q & A with Lisa Harvey

In May 2023 Lisa Harvey celebrated 16 years with Pathfinders. She joined the company when it took over the Inverell Family and Youth Support Services in 2007.

What roles have you had since you joined Pathfinders?

I've worked across a number of sections of the business including non-placement support, residential youth worker, recruitment and assessment co-ordination and I am now in my dream job as Intake Manager for the Foster Care team. I am Manager of the team responsible for recruitment, assessment and support for the foster carers as well as assessing all referrals that come in for children and young people.

Why Pathfinders?

The organisation really aligns with my personal values. I am passionate about creating positive outcomes for children in care and supporting carers, and helping children to find their place in the world and be the best they can be.

You're a mum of four, but you have also foster cared for children as well.

I think I have cared for more than 30 children as a foster parent and respite carer. The youngest was four weeks and the oldest was 15. I started in 1994 but finished in early 2023 when work started to get really busy. My home has always had an open door policy and I have had many of my children's friends stay with me when they had issues at home. I've currently got a family staying with me because they could not find anywhere else.

How was it for your family having so many people living at home?

To their credit they all took it in their stride. They were always happy to help in the kitchen and loved creating special meals. My son took it to the next level and was a contestant in MasterChef a few years ago.

What would you say to someone looking to work for Pathfinders?

Go for it. You won't be disappointed. There's lots of opportunity for growth and personal development. Whenever I have taken on a new role I was given all the training I needed to succeed.



Training and Support

Pathfinders places a significant emphasis on equipping foster parents and caregivers with the necessary tools and knowledge to provide the best possible care for these children. We recognise the diverse and often complex needs of children in foster care, including medical and behavioral.

To address these challenges, Pathfinders has made substantial investments in training and support. Caregivers undergo Shared Lives training through My Forever Family, which is designed to offer comprehensive guidance and preparation. This training is invaluable in helping participants make an informed choice about becoming caregivers, as it provides a deeper understanding of the complexities and responsibilities involved in caring for children, especially those who have experienced trauma in their past.

Understanding trauma-informed approaches is a pivotal aspect of this training. It enables prospective caregivers to approach their care journey with the knowledge and sensitivity needed to create a stable and nurturing environment for the children in their care. This approach is essential, as it acknowledges the impact of trauma on a child's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, and guides caregivers in providing the appropriate support and care to help children heal and thrive.

Out-of-Home Care Services

Out-of-home care is provided to children and young people who are unable to live with their own families. Pathfinders provides care for children and young people until they are able to return home, are placed with a foster carer, or are able to live independently. The length of time in care will vary.

Residential Care Program

The Pathfinders Residential Care Program is designed to assist young people between the ages of 12 to 18 who are unable to live with their parents, relatives, or foster carers. The program offers a safe and caring environment where these young people can live with 24-hour support from care staff. The primary goal is to provide trauma-informed care through a therapeutic approach, creating consistent and nurturing environments for the residents.

During the financial year the program operated in various locations, including Armidale, Glen Innes, Inverell, Tamworth, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Taree. The emphasis is on creating a homelike environment for young individuals with high needs, offering a sense of belonging and support in navigating their unique challenges.

Supported Independent Living

Pathfinders' Supported Independent Living program is a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to assist young people in transitioning to independence. By addressing housing, life skills, and administrative needs while providing personalised support, the program aims to empower these individuals to become self-sufficient and responsible adults.

The program offers the following: Housing, Education and Employment, Property Management, Life Skills, and Administrative Assistance.

All support is tailored to the young person's individual needs, recognising that everyone's circumstances are unique.

As young people's skills and confidence grow, the level of support from caseworkers and

mentors is gradually reduced. The ultimate goal is for the young person to become fully self-sufficient and able to take over their lease independently by the end of the two-year program.

During 2022-23 Pathfinders supported 38 young people, with 15 exiting the program.

Residential Care Testimonial

Hi Guys

I just want to say thanks for everything you have done for me over the years.

I didn't always make the best decisions when I was in resi care but you all supported me, showed how much you cared and helped me to make better choices.

Life has not always been easy for me, sometimes really painful, and there were times I did not want to live in Inverell but I'm in a good spot now and ready for the next steps. I'm still in touch with some of the other resi residents and happy to help them when I can.

I'm glad I met you all – you rock.

Hugh

Interim Care Model

The Interim Care Model plays a vital role in providing temporary, yet essential, care and support to young individuals in need, ensuring their well-being and facilitating their transition to more stable and permanent placements.

Children aged 9 to 14, with low to medium needs, who are at risk of entering an Individual Placement Arrangement (an emergency and temporary arrangement for a child in out-of-home care) are eligible for Interim Care for up to three months to address their immediate needs and vulnerabilities.

The paramount objective is to provide support to the young person while the case managing agency undertakes intensive casework to find suitable long-term placements.

Within the program, children and young people are placed in nurturing, home-like environments that provide round-the-clock supervision and care facilitated by dedicated youth workers.

The program extends beyond the mere provision of shelter, fostering an environment where the children are encouraged to actively engage in day-to-day activities, such as meal planning and preparation, and education and recreational pursuits tailored to the interests and needs of each child.

Encouragement to personalise and decorate their bedrooms allows the children to transform their living spaces into reflections of their individuality and personality, creating a sense of ownership and belonging.

Pathfinders has established homes in Armidale and Port Macquarie and opened a home in Tamworth in June this year.

All up the program has capacity to support 10 children at any one time who are supported by a core team of permanent and temporary staff. During the financial year 18 young people were supported.

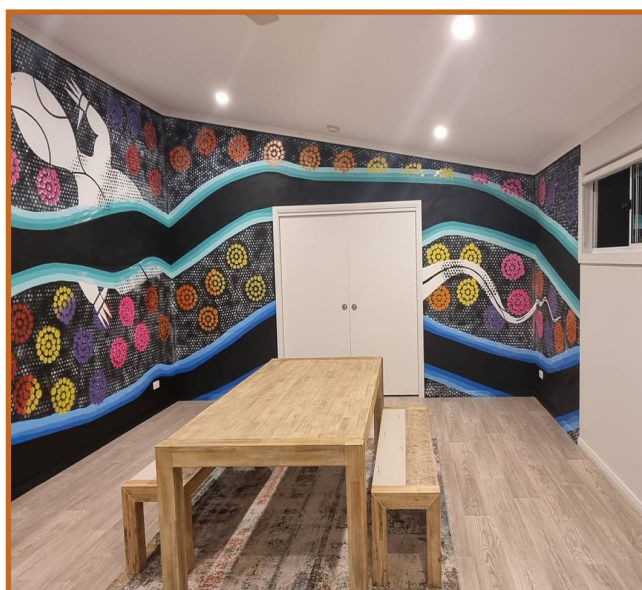
Short-Term Emergency Placements

Short-Term Emergency Placements (STEP) provide 1:1 supervised, emergency residential care for children and young people in out-of-home care who have high and complex needs.

During 2022-2023 Pathfinders operated STEP houses in in Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Inverell, Tamworth, Taree and Foster, supporting 33 children and young people during this time. All children are placed in homelike environments with 24 hour individualised care.

They are encouraged to regularly attend school or other forms of education, undertake after school activities, participate in household decision-making and to personalise their own rooms. Youth workers care for the children's individual needs and connect them with appropriate services and programs including health, education and culture.

While the expectation is that children and young people will leave STEP after three months, in more than 60% of cases this was extended on past the Initial three month stay in care.



Rose Villa's Aboriginal Mural

Talented local artists from Armidale, Bob Blair and Daniel Manson, embarked on the task of creativity for Pathfinders Supported Independent Living facility. Together, they brought to life a colourful mural that not only embellishes the facility's walls but also serves as a powerful symbol of inclusion and community engagement.

A new space has now been created where young people can come together, share meals, engage in conversation, and create lasting memories.

Out-of-Home Care Services

Therapeutic Care is a program to help young people who are dealing with complicated psychological issues resulting in behavioural problems. The aim of therapeutic care is to promote personal change, reflected in changes in thinking, emotional functioning, and behaviour. The financial year saw the re-development of Pathfinders internal Therapeutic Specialist Team.

Therapeutic Care

Pathfinders has onboarded an experienced Senior Therapeutic Specialist with knowledge and expertise in all aspects of Therapeutic care and a passion for sharing this knowledge. Pathfinders' Senior Manager OOHc has worked with the Senior Therapeutic Specialist to update therapeutic referral pathways and processes for triaging complex cases to ensure the support is covering Pathfinders' large geographical area in an efficient manner whilst continuing to build the Therapeutic Care Team.

A focus has been on supporting Pathfinders' foster carers to provide training around the effect trauma has on a young person's development and how this can be exhibited in challenging behaviours. The hope is in time this will lead to a decrease in placement breakdowns as our carers will feel better equipped and supported to manage these challenges.

Training has been developed and facilitated to Pathfinders' care staff addressing the Ten Essential Elements of Therapeutic Care to better position the organisation to move into the Intensive Therapeutic Care contract model in addition to Healing from Trauma Training.

This year also saw the certification and introduction of Pathfinders' Equine Assisted Learning and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. Pilot programs have occurred with Pathfinders SHS teams.

This year has seen an exciting addition to our services with the certification and introduction of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP). These pioneering therapeutic approaches harness the unique bond between humans and horses.

Innovatively, we have successfully conducted pilot professional development programs in collaboration with Pathfinders' Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) teams. These programs offer a dynamic and experiential approach, fostering both personal and professional growth. EAL and EAP capitalise on horses' inherent ability to serve as mirrors, co-regulators, and co-facilitators, facilitating authentic connections that provide a robust foundation for self-reflection and personal development.

Through these programs, participants have had the privilege of engaging in meaningful interactions with our equine partners, nurturing emotional awareness, honing their communication skills, and bolstering their self-confidence. These competencies are invaluable, particularly for support workers dealing with vulnerable individuals. These ground-breaking initiatives underscore our unwavering commitment to continuously evolving our therapeutic offerings, ensuring they align with and address the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

The year has been marked by substantial progress and innovation within Pathfinder's Therapeutic Care Team. We remain dedicated to enhancing our services, equipping our staff, and enriching the lives of the children and young people under our care. With the introduction of Equine Assisted Learning and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy, we are poised to provide even more effective, experiential, and transformative therapeutic solutions to those we serve.

Non-Placement Support

Non-Placement Support Services (NPSS) is a fee-for-service program offered in the New England and along the Mid North Coast. The service offers a variety of services to children and young people in out-of-home care (OOHC) and their families.

These services are provided through individual client agreements and are approved by the Department of Communities and Justice Casework Support Scheme (CSS).

The provision of a range of support services for children and young people beyond their typical placement is crucial for meeting their diverse needs and aims to enhance their overall well-being, development, and connections with family and community.

Services provided by the NPSS team include: supervised birth family contact, transport to appointments and visits, youth mentoring, and temporary respite care.

These services collectively help address the broader needs of children and young people in care, promoting their mental, emotional, and social development. Additionally, they support the establishment and maintenance of positive connections with family, including cultural connections, promoting the well-being and stability necessary for the child's growth and potential family reunification efforts.

During the financial year the NPSS team of 33 staff worked with 93 families including 23 Aboriginal families, were involved in more than 2000 activities such as transport, supervised visits and mentoring, and travelled 328,000 kilometres. The service area expanded from the New England region out to the Mid North Coast and Far North NSW.

The NPSS team is looking to expand its successful mentoring program in a pilot program that gives young people in out-of-home care opportunities to work with a range of mentors who match their interests, whether that be hobbies or employment aspirations.

The aim is to have a number of mentors who have specific skills, for example: arts and crafts, sports, building, writing, horticulture, who can work in a trauma informed environment to support young people grow and develop.



Nicholas

18-year-old Nicholas suffered from severe social anxiety – so much so he had rarely left his home in five years. Disengaged from school, unable to manage interpersonal relations, completely disconnected from society, he was experiencing a significant impact on his overall well-being and quality of life. Social anxiety can be a crippling condition, and it severely hindered his ability to interact with others.

Through the Non Placement Support Services mentoring program Nicholas was supported to transition from his care home to independent living with a sibling. The mentor provided a supportive environment to make Nicholas gradually feel comfortable to leave his home, apply for jobs and prepare for interviews, sit for his driver's licence, go shopping, and engage in his favourite hobby – fishing.

While his journey towards overcoming social anxiety will require time, patience, and consistent effort, he is well on his way to reclaiming his life and finding a sense of connection with the world around him.

Aboriginal Community Services

Launched in November 2022, the Momentum Program focuses on removing barriers that hinder access to licenses and promotes road safety and employment within Aboriginal communities. The program has been designed in collaboration with Aboriginal communities, and the program model is informed by research on best practice in service delivery for Indigenous communities in Australia and worldwide.

Momentum

It is a comprehensive initiative tailored to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Northern New South Wales to achieve several crucial objectives:

Birth Registration and Certification

The program aims to facilitate the process of birth registration and certification, ensuring that all participants have proper legal documentation related to their birth.

Driver Qualifications

The program focuses on helping participants obtain necessary driver qualifications, including Learner Licences and Provisional Driver Licences, which can significantly enhance their mobility and access to employment opportunities.

Sustained Employment

The central objective is to assist participants in securing sustained employment, providing them with the skills and support needed to enter and thrive in the workforce.

The Momentum Program combines and integrates these three critical services into a unified and coherent initiative. This integrated approach is specifically designed to address key barriers that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people often encounter, aiming to boost employment rates and improve overall wellbeing within these communities.

Importantly, the development of the Momentum Program has been a collaborative effort involving close consultation with Aboriginal

communities. The program's model is grounded in research on best practices in service delivery, both within Australia and globally, ensuring that it aligns with the unique needs and preferences of Aboriginal communities.

Throughout the service delivery period, the program aims to engage and provide support to a significant number of participants. The program has targets of 2,000 participants obtaining birth certificates, 1,120 participants completing a learner course, 900 participants gaining P plates and 536 participants commencing the job placement program. This reflects the program's commitment to making a meaningful and widespread impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the North-East NSW region.

During the financial year period there have been more than 16 sign-up days, more than 60 birth certificates issued, 65 licences obtained and five employment placements. In a gender breakdown, 55% of participants were male and 45% were female.



Aboriginal Early Years

The Aboriginal Early Years Program (AEYP) is a free service that engages with families of young children, aged between two and six years, to encourage attendance at preschool and to support transition to school and, to ensure children are ready. Our goal is to make their experience a positive one.

Our Support Workers engage with childhood and care providers to identify Aboriginal children who are ready for school or preschool. Working with the family a program and referral pathway to suit the child's strengths and needs is developed. By explaining the benefits of Early Childhood Education our Support Workers help families to locate appropriate childcare options, assisting with the enrolment process and supporting the child and family throughout this period. Families are given skills and opportunities to give children a good start in life through improved early childhood development, care, education, socialisation, literacy and numeracy.

While the AEYP is based in Armidale, Inverell and Gunnedah, our Support Workers also work with families and young children in the surrounding areas.

The nature of the program means that the number of families and young children in the program at any one time varies. As a child starts their education journey and successfully transitions into school, we continue to work with families and educators. This support could take the form of programs to assist the families of children adjusting to school, referral to other appropriate services, including speech pathologists and occupational therapists, connecting families with school transition programs, connection to kinship and country activities.

Members of the AEYP team sit on numerous community organisations focused on improving educational opportunities Aboriginal children. Work has been done to increase the number of early learning placements for Aboriginal children.



Achieving Goals with Momentum

Emily Ford, from Newcastle, signed up to the Momentum Program after hearing about it from her job provider, Salvation Army Employment Plus.

Pathfinders helped her with her application for her birth certificate and she was supported by ACE Community College to practice for her driving licence test, which she passed on her first try. This is a significant achievement that will enhance her mobility and employment opportunities.

Next step for Emily is to complete driving lessons with ACE and to gain her tax file number so she will be ready to start work with support from Real Futures.

At the start of the program Emily was not quite sure what to expect and was not confident she would be able to pass anything, but as she moves through the Momentum Program her confidence has grown significantly.

Emily's success serves as an inspiration and a reminder of the potential for transformation and growth that the program offers.

Aboriginal Community Services

The Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program is making it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for and receive their birth certificate. The PNABC program conducts sign-up days in towns and areas where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who don't have birth certificates.

Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program

The Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate (PNABC) program supported over 2,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in applying for and receiving their birth certificates during the 2022-23 financial year.

Throughout the year, the program identified specific communities in need of support. To address this, 28 sign-up events were conducted in consultation with communities, targeting locations with low birth registration and high numbers of individuals without birth certificates.

Regional Events

In July, responding to the impact of the devastating 2022 NSW floods, the program extended its outreach to provide assistance in Taree, Kempsey, Coffs Harbour, Ballina, and Lismore resulting in 143 applications.

In August, sign-up events were held in Wellington, Bathurst, and Orange, receiving 305 applications.

In March, the team headed to Western NSW to conduct nine sign-up events in Narromine, Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo, Cowra, Orange, Dubbo, Walgett, Goodooga, and Lightning Ridge, resulting in 775 applications.

In May, the team held five sign-up events in Rooty Hill, Narrandera, Griffith, Hay, and Balranald, resulting in 390 applications.

In June, the program hosted six sign-up events in Cobar, Nyngan, Warren, Gilgandra, Gundah, and Coonabarabran, resulting in 328 applications.

Canberra Events

The team travelled to Canberra in October, hosting events at the Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services, Gudan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation, and CIT Yurauna Educational Centre of Excellence. These events resulted in 170 birth certificate applications.

Following each sign-up event, the program received additional (20 to 30) applications from individuals unable to attend or complete the necessary paperwork at the event. The program continued to receive additional online applications via email and through Pathfinders website during the year.

Crowdfunding

In March 2022, we launched a crowdfunding campaign through Chuffed.org to raise funds to sustain the program. The response from the community and beyond has been overwhelming, with over 3,000 individuals generously contributing to the cause, resulting in \$200,737 being donated to the program.

Thanks to the financial backing received through the crowdfunding campaign, the program has been able to extend its reach, ensuring that even more individuals in need have access to the services provided by PNABC.

UNICEF Australia

UNICEF Australia joined forces with Pathfinders to support the PNABC program in October 2022. Their support has enabled the program to reach more communities and children this year. The team has supported the delivery and actively participated in a number of sign-up events, providing valuable support during the events held in Canberra and Gunnedah in Central NSW.

The team conducted community consultations during the sign-up event in Gunnedah for further research. The team took the time to engage with program participants, discussing the challenges and barriers they had faced in obtaining a birth certificate. Additionally, conversations delved into the benefits and opportunities that having a birth certificate could provide. The content collected during community consultations will aid in strengthening UNICEF Australia's case for the importance of universal birth registration in Australia.

The media and communications team from UNICEF Australia worked with our team to support media coverage. Their assistance resulted in extensive coverage across television and print media throughout the year. UNICEF Australia's media support not only increased awareness but also highlighted the critical importance of addressing birth certificate accessibility.

The partnership with UNICEF Australia brings unique expertise to the program, having led initiatives across the globe to promote vital registration practices. This partnership reflects UNICEF's global commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, aligning seamlessly with the goals of the PNABC program.



Now on Track

Kelvin participated in the PNABC program sign-up event held in Goonellabah (Lismore) in July 2022, seeking assistance in obtaining a birth certificate. Faced with challenges due to living apart from his family, Kelvin had struggled for years to acquire the necessary documentation. Despite previous online attempts, he encountered difficulties providing sufficient ID for the application. Grateful for the support, Kelvin successfully completed the application at the event. He shared that this was perfect timing as he was about to start a new job, having faced rejections from multiple employers during his job search due to the absence of a birth certificate to complete the application.



A Positive Community Impact

Last year, we met Cindy at the PNABC sign-up event in Orange. Expressing gratitude, Cindy told the team she not only appreciated the personal support she received but also recognised the positive impact the program was having on her community, stating that she was astonished at how many people had come forward. As an older individual, Cindy said that she had struggled trying to complete an online birth certificate application, making the event in Orange particularly valuable for her.

Tilbuster Station Youth Works

Tilbuster Station is a significant property that was gifted to Pathfinders by Dr Marie Delaney with the specific intent of using the land to nurture child and youth development and family support. Over time, it has evolved into a versatile youth and family centre with ongoing upgrades and construction, becoming a regional hub for training and education.

Tilbuster Station

During the past financial year, Tilbuster Station continued to demonstrate its value to Pathfinders and the broader community with over 300 visitors and various events like cultural camps, open days, school visits, workshops, and working bees.

The young people who work on the property are encouraged by staff to engage in meaningful projects that benefit both themselves and the community. This approach instils a strong work ethic and helps them recognise the positive impact of their contributions.

Planting pumpkins, vegetables, and native plants, caring for the environment, understanding work health and safety issues, working as a team, understanding instructions, and interacting with the public have given the young people who work on the farm a sense of purpose, achievement and responsibility.

Under the supervision of the five dedicated staff who work at Tilbuster, the young people in Pathfinders' care are encouraged to set goals and accomplishments and to grasp opportunities for personal growth and development.

There were several highlights during the year. Chief among these was the Pumpkin Run, which returned after a short hiatus due to drought and COVID.

More than four kilometres of pumpkins seeds were plant for the Pumpkin Run which this year pivoted to support families on the coast who had been impacted due to excessive flooding.

At the start of this year, Pathfinders received a kind donation from the Armidale Rotary group. The donation was gifted to Pathfinders to assist with the completion of our new Yarning Circle. The completion of the Yarning Circle, a forum where young people feel their voices are respected and heard, was a major achievement and has proved popular with staff, young people and visitors alike.

The Armidale Aboriginal Men's Group and the Armidale Fijian Men's Group have provided mentoring and cultural support to our young people in informal sessions held at the property.

Pathfinders' Cultural Camps, held at Tilbuster, have played a vital role in reconnecting Aboriginal young people to their culture and heritage, especially those who are living away from their families.

During Foster Carers Week the property hosted an event to recognise and celebrate the families who have opened their homes to foster children.

Work has begun with the Armidale Community College to develop tailor made courses around work readiness which will be introduced in 2024.

Tilbuster is fortunate to have the support of the local community with a regular group of volunteers. More than 70% of staff, young people and volunteers identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Pathfinders Cultural Camps

Pathfinders Cultural Camps are invaluable in helping Aboriginal young people reconnect with their culture and heritage, providing them with a sense of identity, belonging, and pride in their Indigenous heritage. These camps play a crucial role in addressing the historical and ongoing challenges faced by Aboriginal communities and contribute to the overall well-being and cultural preservation of Aboriginal young people.

The involvement of Aboriginal Elders, Pathfinders staff, and community members in these camps is crucial for sharing Aboriginal culture and knowledge across generations. It not only enriches the participants' understanding of their heritage but also enhances their well-being and self-identity.

The inclusion of respected Elders, such as Uncle Dave Widders, Uncle Lenny Waters, and Auntie Rosemary Curtis, further amplifies the cultural exchange and learning. Uncle Dave Widders, as a traditional custodian and Anaiwan Elder, performed a Welcome to Country, explaining its significance to the attendees, allowing for a deeper understanding of Aboriginal customs and traditions.

The various activities provided at the camp, both for males and females, are designed to be enjoyable learning experiences. Artwork activities, for instance, allow the young people to express their cultural identity and take a piece of it home with them. Workshops focusing on Aboriginal weapons, artefacts, and the importance of preserving cultural history educate the participants on the tools used in traditional Aboriginal life and emphasise the significance of protecting Aboriginal heritage.

Overall, the Pathfinders Cultural Camps serve as a means to empower Aboriginal youth by reconnecting them with their roots, instilling pride in their identity, and fostering a strong sense of cultural belonging.



Empower our Youth

Pathfinders Cultural Camps serve as a means to empower Aboriginal youth by reconnecting them with their roots, instilling pride in their identity, and fostering a strong sense of cultural belonging.



Sharing Knowledge

Workshops were facilitated to share knowledge with our young people about the different types of Aboriginal weapons, artefacts, and the importance of protecting cultural history.

Specialist Homelessness Support Services

Pathfinders' Specialist Homelessness Services play a crucial role in supporting vulnerable individuals and families, helping them secure stable housing, develop life skills, and improve their overall well-being.

The shortage of rental properties, increases in rent and cost of living have contributed to making this financial year the busiest in terms of demands on our services.

Specialist Homelessness Support Service

Under the Going Home Staying Home program our homelessness team worked with real estate agents and Homes North to support 356 people to transition into stable, independent properties managed by Pathfinders in Glen Innes, Inverell and Armidale, along with private rentals. There is a family home in Glen Innes and Inverell, and four shared living properties in Armidale. These Armidale properties offer a combined total of 10 beds, providing young individuals with access to transitional accommodation.

Many of our families and young people seek assistance from our service without possessing rental references. The absence of references poses a significant hurdle when applying for rental properties through real estate agencies. Staying within these transitional properties not only provides housing but also the invaluable opportunity to obtain a rental reference.

Our collaboration with Homes North has helped clients secure housing and overcome barriers, and some have transitioned from crisis accommodation to private rentals. Brokerage support has been provided to clients for emergency accommodation, tenancy establishment and maintenance, and essential items. Household transition kits are distributed to ease the moving process for clients.

This holistic approach to addressing homelessness and related challenges has yielded substantial positive outcomes for our clients.

Highlights of the financial year include:

- Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Homes North to prioritise Pathfinders' clients who are staying in the Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge, or who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Delivery of more than 10 life skills initiatives throughout the year, assisting young individuals in securing stable, long-term leases and equipping them with valuable, transferable skills.
- Connecting individuals to external organisations and programs, such as "Bringing Up Great Kids – Parenting after Violence and Trauma," "Boxing for Wellness and Self-esteem," and "Equine Assisted Learning."
- Establishing and strengthening partnerships with Armajun Health Services, Homes North, Second Bites, and OzHarvest, to provide essential support and resources to vulnerable community members. Individuals grappling with the challenges of rising living costs are exceedingly thankful for the provision of Second Bites. For some of them, it has made a pivotal difference, helping to keep their living expenses comfortably below their payment threshold. Collectively, across all three areas, we extend this assistance to approximately 80 families and individuals.
- Financial support provided to 60 families and individuals who needed funding to keep their rent up to date, or to purchase essential items.



Equine Assisted Learning

Two siblings, aged 8 and 11 years old, participated in individual Equine Assisted Learning sessions. These sessions were tailored to address their emotional well-being, teach grounding techniques, breathing exercises, and encourage the recognition and expression of their feelings. This provided a safe and non-judgmental space for the children to openly discuss their concerns and thoughts.

Inverell and Glen Innes Specialist Homelessness Support Service

An SHS client in Inverell has received substantial support in securing accommodation and has recently achieved success in securing a private rental property, thanks to the advocacy and ongoing assistance provided by the Specialist Homelessness Service.

As we eagerly anticipate our upcoming projects and programs, we look forward to being actively involved in the following in-house initiatives for the year 2023/2024

- Love Bites
- Rent it Keep it
- Living Skills
- Job Search Skills and Resume Writing
- Job Hunting
- Gardening and Yard Maintenance
- Basic Household Repair Skills
- Abuse Awareness Project



Securing Housing

A family under the care of SHS in Glen Innes has achieved the milestone of securing a private rental after enduring months of moving between friends and family, a situation commonly referred to as couch-surfing. This family comprises a father and his teenage daughter who proudly identify as Aboriginal. The father has faced historical challenges related to alcohol addiction and mental health, alongside managing some ongoing medical issues with great resilience. In their quest to find a suitable tenancy, multiple SHS workers worked together collaboratively to support the family throughout their journey. This collective effort continues as they endeavour to maintain their tenancy. The family has proven to be responsible tenants, ensuring their rent is paid punctually each week.

Disability Support Services

Support Your Path provides innovative and personalised direct care supports to assist participants with a disability to embrace life and reach their goals. Pathfinders is committed to ensuring greater independence for the people we care for, encouraging participation and learning.

Support Your Path

Pathfinders' Support Your Path (SYP) program is dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities. During the financial year our focus has been on the construction of purpose built facilities to enable people with disabilities to live independently in a home like environment with professional care. We are passionate about helping participants embrace life and reach their goals, fostering greater independence while encouraging participation and learning.

In a significant development, the Pathfinders' SYP program formed a strategic partnership with ADAPT Housing, a specialist disability accommodation provider. This partnership will provide supported independent living services in brand new accommodation.

Notably, the construction of 8 and 10 Dala Lane, Armidale has been successfully completed, and ground-breaking has occurred for the Marsh Street dwelling in Armidale. Several projects are in the pipeline, including a Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) building in Coffs Harbour (seven villas), an SDA dwelling in Tamworth (10 villas), and an SDA dwelling in Inverell (two villas).

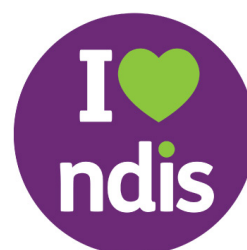
The SYP team has worked collaboratively with staff in our Out-of-Home Care sector, focusing on identifying children and young people who showed signs of developmental delays, disabilities, or impairment affecting their ability to function. This work has resulted in active advocacy to facilitate their transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for sustained financial support and assistance. Similarly, the team has also worked with staff from the

Short Term Accommodation and Supported Independent Living programs to ensure young people with disabilities are fully supported and are able to access all resources and training available to them.

Community engagement and awareness raising around Pathfinders' expansion into the NDIS and specialist disability accommodation spaces were key activities for the team during the financial year. We participated in the Links for Life Disability Expo in Tamworth which is a cornerstone event in the disability support community. Pathfinders and ADAPT Housing hosted a free information session to share details about our partnership and initiatives.

A number of key additions to the team have occurred this year, including a Disabilities Support Manager, a Senior Disabilities Coordinator Mid North Coast and a Senior Disabilities Coordinator New England.

As we look ahead towards another year of growth and success, Pathfinders remains committed to enriching the lives of individuals with disabilities through innovative services, community engagement, and strategic partnerships.



Programs and Services

Pathfinders Pumpkin Run

Pathfinders Pumpkin Run has been a great success in helping our young people and the disadvantaged. By donating pumpkins and cooking meals to those in need across New South Wales, our young people engage in the action of generosity and feel a sense of pride in giving back to the community.

The 2022 Pumpkin Run

On a chilly and misty morning at Tilbuster Station in July 2022, we farewelled a convoy of young people, staff and volunteers as they started their two week journey for the Pumpkin Run.

Escorted out of Armidale by the local police, the motorcade of ten vehicles laden with more than nine tonnes of pumpkins, weaved its way eastwards down to the NSW coast to support people who had been impacted by the devastating floods.

There had been no Pumpkin Run in the three years prior because of COVID and drought, and while this year's crop had been severely impacted by poor weather, particularly excessive rain and lack of sunshine, we managed to harvest a crop of Queensland Blues, Japanese and Butternut pumpkins. These had all been planted in November 2021 by staff and young people. In all there were more than four kilometres of pumpkins planted. Donations to supplement the crop came in the form of produce and funding from members of the communities in which we work.

A route to Taree, Kempsey, Coffs Harbour, Ballina and Lismore had been planned and partnerships established with key organisations including OzHarvest, Coles, soup kitchens and community centres. Another exciting addition to the Pumpkin Run event was the running of Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate sign up activities at each community along the Pumpkin Run route.

The Pumpkin Run is a major logistical operation and staff from all programs were involved

in the planning and design. The Pumpkin Run is a very special, unique activity that has been warmly embraced by our young people who learn to give without expecting anything in return, a valuable life lesson that not only benefits the recipients but also enriches the givers' lives, promoting a culture of compassion, altruism, and community engagement.



Lismore

In Lismore, the team set up for the day at Clifford Park in Goonellabah. The team then spent the chilly morning working in the kitchen, where they prepared and cooked fresh, hot pumpkin soup for the community.

Following this, the team headed into town to deliver hundreds of pumpkins to the Koori Kitchen, established in response to the floods to provide free and low-cost meals to those in need. The Koori Kitchen effectively distributed the pumpkins to individuals faced by food shortages within the community.

Pumpkin Run Photo Gallery





Community Housing Provider

As a Community Housing Provider, Pathfinders has begun the first phase in its commitment to invest in the expansion of its supported housing capacity. Our goal is to deliver social and affordable housing and related services to people on very low, low or moderate incomes.

Community Housing

As the homelessness crisis continues to worsen we believe we are uniquely placed to fill a gap in the provision of homelessness services through the development of community housing.

Safe, secure and affordable housing is central to a person's health and well-being, their ability to enjoy and take part in community life, and the ability to work and participate in education and training. Being unable to access appropriate housing can contribute towards isolation, a loss of independence and in some cases can lead to a need for residential care, to hospital admission or to homelessness.

Pathfinders knows that just giving someone a house is not enough. There are members of

every community who require more tailored housing, with a degree of support attached, whether this is on a temporary or permanent basis. They may be vulnerable due to the relationships they have, their age or ill health, have a long-standing illness or disability, or lack the skills to manage a tenancy and need support to maintain their independence.

For some people, supported housing may be their last step on the housing ladder as they grow older and look for a home which meets their changing needs. For others, including young people, supported housing may be a step along the way to fully independent living, or may form a vital part of a planned journey into mainstream housing and out of homelessness.



Hands on Learning at the Royal

During the year young volunteers from Tilbuster Station showcased their hands-on skills at the Royal Hotel. Under the guidance of Farm Manager Toni Simmons, they engaged in floor sanding, polishing, and various repairs, learning not just technical skills but also the importance of patience, attention to detail, and workplace interpersonal skills. The Royal Hotel project is not just about renovation; it's been an opportunity for skill-building and personal development.

The Royal Hotel

Pathfinders purchase of the disused Royal Hotel several years ago, with seed funding from the Federal Government, was the beginning of a long-held vision by the Pathfinders’ team and Board to secure premises in Glen Innes, where we could create a safe place and supportive environment for young people.

The Royal Hotel

Our aim is to repurpose the building to provide a range of support and education services for vulnerable young people to engage in real day-to-day activities including education and training, employment, volunteering, mentoring, and recreation. The building also serves as our main headquarters for the Glen Innes area and is home to our local Specialist Homelessness Support Service and out-of-home care programs teams.

A storm and car accident damaged parts of the building and these areas will be demolished to make the premises safe and then rebuilt to be fit for purpose, at all times respecting the heritage properties of the building.

At the completion of all works within the hotel, Pathfinders will assess and prioritise the re-development of the property focusing on the needs of vulnerable youth and those who are homeless and who are at risk of homelessness in the New England region. There are also plans for the building to become a central community hub for use by the broader community.

Both the building works and the employment of staff at the Royal will see a significant boost to the local economy.

Skill Sharing at the Royal Hotel

The request by Managers to begin repairs to the family unit at the Royal Hotel was an opportunity by the Tilbuster team to continue sharing hands-on skills and knowledge with our young people who attend Tilbuster Station.

The scope of works at the Royal included sanding and polishing of the floorboards of the kitchen, front verandah, hallways and two bedrooms, adding custom made polycarbonate covering over the internal glass windows, and tiling around the old fireplace in the living room.

Every Tuesday and Wednesday, Tilbuster Station Farm Manager, Toni Simmons, would transport a group of young volunteers up to the Royal Hotel to join staff members, Ray and Semi, where they were given a brief on the objectives and tasks and what was required of each participant to safely work under their supervision.

Participants were given the appropriate safety PPE and learnt to safely use small belt sanders, large drum sanders, directional and cross sanding methods, using centre punches on each floor nail, filling nail holes with fillers then sanding back with various sandpaper grits before floor boards were carefully stained.

Floor sanding is a repetitive and slow-paced process, yet it can be used as an educational tool for our young volunteers. It teaches young people patience and builds their attention to detail skills.

Once again, the participants observed and were encouraged to practice basic workplace interpersonal skills such as common courtesy, respect and team play which is a major component of our mentoring and daily routine at Tilbuster Station. They all will be able to add their experience to their resumes.

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DIRECTORS REPORT 2023

Your directors present their report on the company for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

Principal Activities

The Company (called Pathfinders Ltd) is a public company limited by guarantee.

The Company is a charitable institution dedicated to:

- Providing housing and supported accommodation for the homeless, including operating refuges for youth, women, and children.
- Supporting disadvantaged families, individuals, children, and young people.
- Offering 24/7 Out of Home Residential and Foster Care for children and young people under the guardianship of the NSW Minister for Communities and Justice.
- Assisting people with disabilities to engage more effectively in their communities.
- Delivering rural skills, child protection, family support, youth services, youth homelessness, and vocational training programs for disadvantaged young people.
- Alleviating poverty.
- Providing training, work readiness and educational programs.

Pathfinders (ABN 64 146 004 524) operates as a nonprofit organisation registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, functioning as a company limited by guarantee without a share capital. All our Directors serve voluntarily and do not receive any compensation for their roles. The Board of Directors is responsible for formulating both short-term and long-term strategies for Pathfinders, guided by the organization's Constitution and legal obligations.

The execution of these strategies and the day-to-day management of the organisation are officially entrusted to the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team by the Board. To address complex matters, the Board has established committees that delve into specific issues, with the outcomes of these committee meetings reported at subsequent Board meetings.

Pathfinders Key achievements:

1. Development and launch of Pathfinders first Cultural Camp at Pathfinders Tllbuster Station farm.
2. Design and launch of new company website.
3. 3 staff undertaking certification and development activities so as to launch Equine Assisted Learning programs.

4. Expanding and developing the Pathways OOHC Program, including foster care and residential care components, STEP and ICM's aligning with DCJ OOHC Reforms and Permanency Support Program.
5. Installation of a new communal kitchen, dining, and recreational lounge area at Rose Villa. The upgraded facility offers 10 units, one 3-bedroom residence and one fully self-contained unit. Completion of Mural by local Aboriginal artists Bob Blair and Dan Manson.
6. Purchase of commercial asset - Pathfinders Inverell office.
7. Establishment of partnership with UNICEF Australia.
8. In response to the continued COVID-19 Pandemic, Pathfinders demonstrated exceptional adaptability by reforming how our team operates. We prioritised the safety of our staff, allowing for increased flexibility, enabling them to work from home while ensuring compliance with our rigorous Work, Health, and Safety policies.
9. Expanding on existing Education and Training services already offered including Aboriginal Early Years programs, Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Playgroups, School Programs, Education Support and Breakfast clubs, further developing our Marie Delaney Training and plans to commence an Education Centre at TIlbuster Farm Station in Armidale and commercial kitchen and training centre at the Royal in Glen Innes.
10. Growing and Expanding Specialist Disability Accommodation and Support Your Path (NDIS) disability support providing care to support individuals to thrive in their community, support their independence, and live their life freely with hope and equal opportunity.
11. Delivering a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Birth Certificate Program, ensuring access to a birth certificate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and crowd funding over \$300k to keep the program operational.
12. Contributing to State-wide policy development through participation on peak body boards such as ACWA, Yfoundations, NCOSS, and FONGA.
13. Implementing frameworks for Pathfinders Strategic Plan (2020-2025) with defined organisational KPIs for progress tracking, fully supported by Scaling Up methodology.
14. Facilitating collaboration between DCJ, Health, and FCS providers to integrate FCSS with NSW Child Protection Programs, in line with recommendations from Pathfinders Patron, The Hon. James Wood.
15. The 2022 Pathfinders Pumpkin Run changed routes and delivered pumpkins and pumpkin soup to residents impacted by floods on the Mid North Coast.

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Directors

The names of the directors in office at any time during, or since the end of, the financial year are:

Directors Name

- Tony Gargan
- Craig Hunt
- Korrina Schultz
- Leeah Daley
- Rosemary Curtis
- Mark Keogh
- Monique Beange
- Alex Shaw
- Damian Hall

Meetings of Directors

During the financial year, 8 meetings of the Board of Directors were held and the attendances by each Director during the year were as follows:

Director's Meetings

	Eligible to attend	Number attended
Rose Curtis	8	8
Tony Gargan	1	1
Monique Beange	8	7
Craig Hunt	7	7
Leeah Daley	8	4
Alex Shaw	3	2
Korrina Schultz	8	8
Mark Keogh	8	2
Damian Hall	1	0

Membership Details

Pathfinders Ltd is a public company limited by guarantee and no shares or options are issued. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10.00 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the company.

Membership Class	Number of Members	Individual Members Contribution on winding up of Company	Total Members contribution on winding up of Company
Ordinary Members	25	\$10	\$250
Associate Members	6	\$10	\$60
Total	31	\$10	\$310

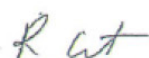
Auditors' Independence Declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 60-40 of the ACNC Act 2012 is attached to these financial statements.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Director Korrina Schultz
Dated: 7 November 2023



Director Rosemary Curtis
Dated: 7 November 2023

**AUDITORS' INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION
UNDER SECTION 60-40 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES
AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012
TO THE BOARD MEMBERS OF
PATHFINDERS LTD**

ABN 64 146 004 524

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the financial year to 30 June 2023 there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

CROWE CENTRAL NORTH



Kylie Ellis
Partner
Registered Company Auditor
134 Taylor Street
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Dated: 7 November 2023

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is external audit, conducted via the Crowe Australasia external audit division and Unison SMSF Audit. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

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STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	2	48,478,251	35,871,841
Other Income	3	1,140,420	381,041
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method		89,649	6,609
Administration expenses		(2,569,274)	(1,740,647)
Borrowing costs		(264,622)	(139,233)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	4	(1,597,837)	(1,399,063)
Employee benefits expense		(29,302,552)	(22,170,839)
Occupancy costs		(12,698,875)	(8,292,312)
Surplus before income tax expense		3,275,160	2,517,397
Income tax expense	1(b)	-	-
Surplus after income tax expense		3,275,160	2,517,397
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		3,275,160	2,517,397

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	5,945,977	7,498,461
Trade and other receivables	6	1,999,291	1,069,576
Financial assets	8	4,329,655	-
Contract assets	7	347,478	716,795
Other assets	9	226,181	119,853
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		12,848,582	9,404,685
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	10	7,130,957	5,183,660
Intangible assets	11	33,397	93,156
Right-of-use assets	12	3,221,069	3,073,986
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS		10,385,423	8,350,802
TOTAL ASSETS		23,234,005	17,755,487
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	13	2,476,494	2,166,273
Contract liabilities	14	1,171,143	797,759
Financial liabilities	15	82,251	1,029,713
Provisions	16	1,056,601	853,235
Lease liabilities	17	922,438	866,391
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		5,708,927	5,713,371
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Financial liabilities	15	1,895,000	-
Provisions	16	795,318	673,500
Lease liabilities	17	2,432,033	2,241,049
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		5,122,351	2,914,549
TOTAL LIABILITIES		10,831,278	8,627,920
NET ASSETS		12,402,727	9,127,567
EQUITY			
Asset maintenance and refurbishment reserve	18	100,000	100,000
Planned maintenance reserve	18	352,217	311,182
Accumulated funds		11,950,510	8,716,385
TOTAL EQUITY		12,402,727	9,127,567

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Asset Maintenance & Refurbishment Reserves \$	Planned Maintenance Reserve \$
Balance at 1 July 2021	100,000	271,342
Surplus after income tax expense	-	-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve	-	39,840
Balance at 30 June 2022	100,000	311,182
Surplus after income tax expense	-	-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve	-	41,035
Balance at 30 June 2023	100,000	352,217

	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2021	6,238,828	6,610,170
Surplus after income tax expense	2,517,397	2,517,397
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Realisation of reserves	-	39,840
Transfer to/(from) reserve	(39,840)	(39,840)
Balance at 30 June 2022	8,716,385	9,127,567
Surplus after income tax expense	3,275,160	3,275,160
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Realisation of reserves	-	41,035
Transfer to/(from) reserve	(41,035)	(41,035)
Balance at 30 June 2023	11,950,510	12,402,727

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from customers		53,234,295	38,699,015
Interest received		179,297	13,218
Payments to suppliers and employees		(47,870,419)	(34,114,419)
Interest paid		(264,622)	(139,233)
Net cash provided by operating activities		5,278,551	4,458,581
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for plant and equipment		(2,583,871)	(1,415,354)
Payments for intangible assets		-	(20,000)
Payments for investments		(4,329,655)	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(6,913,526)	(1,435,354)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from borrowings		1,955,000	243,529
Repayment of borrowings		(1,007,462)	-
Repayment of lease liabilities		(865,047)	(929,077)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		82,491	(685,548)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash held		(1,552,484)	2,337,679
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		7,498,461	5,160,782
Cash at the end of the financial year	5	5,945,977	7,498,461



Annual Report
2022 -2023

www.pathfinders.ngo